

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Annie M. Sullivan, December 30, 1901

December 30, 1901. Dear Miss Sullivan: —

I am glad to hear from Miss Villa J. Curren that you propose to demonstrate to the world that my innocent little statement in Baddeck that “the methods pursued by Miss Sullivan in the education of Helen Keller would revolutionize the teaching of the deaf”, was NOT “incorrect, misleading, and mischievous” as stated by our good friend Mr. Wade!

Seriously, it delights me to know that you propose to direct the education of a young deaf child through Miss Curren, if you can get the proper child. I need hardly tell you that I shall be very glad to be of assistance in this matter. The only question is how to get the proper child. I have a plan that will surely produce the child if you don't object to it, and that is to PUBLISH THE FACT that you and Miss Curren desire a little child. The mere publication of the fact in the columns of the Review will at once lead to the desired result. May the Review allude to the matter?

I have recently been in communication with a lady in Texas about the education of her little girl under seven years of age. This child's education has been begun by an oral teacher at home, but the mother was anxious to get another teacher. The mother has become exceedingly anxious upon the subject of the education of the deaf from the fact that she has discovered that her little boy — almost a baby — is also deaf. I should imagine that this little boy might — if you could get him — prove to be the pupil you, I presume would want — an extremely young deaf child, who has nothing to unlearn.

I hesitate to give you the name and address until I know more of your plans, and until I have communicated with the mother, but I write by this mail to the mother in Texas, giving her your address so she can communicate with you if she desires.

Library of Congress

I am very much pleased with the appearance of Miss Curren. What are her capabilities? Do you consider that she has in her the makings of a good teacher of deaf children.

Please give my best love to Helen, and I wish you both a Very Happy New Year, and many of them.

Yours sincerely, Alexander Graham Bell
Miss Annie Sullivan, 14 Coolidge Ave.,
Cambridge, Mass.